

A PROFILE OF FACULTY LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR AT ONE SOUTH TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE*

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Abstract

Literature lacks documentation on the leadership characteristics of public community college faculty. As higher education institutions begin to prepare for what appears to be a current leadership retirement wave, it is important for community colleges to begin searching for replacements. The research was conducted to explore self-perceived leadership behaviors resulting in a leadership profile of teaching faculty at one south Texas community college. Findings include the extent to which faculty exercise identified behaviors associated with transformational leadership. Analyses of self-reported leadership behavior were performed based on selected demographic variables that included but were not limited to gender, age, race/ethnicity, highest degree, years of teaching experience at the current institution, and general teaching area. Inferential data analysis of faculty leadership behavior found no significant differences across demographic variables except when comparing race/ethnicity. Hispanic faculty scored significantly higher than white faculty in all areas except for Encourage. Overall, faculty perceived personal leadership behavior to be more enabling and less inspiring.



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1 Sumario en español

La literatura falta documentación en las características de liderazgo de la comunidad pública facultad colegial. Como instituciones de educación superior comienzan a preparar para lo que parece ser una onda actual de jubilación de liderazgo, es importante para colegios de comunidad empiece buscar para reemplazos. La investigación fue realizada para explorar conductas auto percibidos de liderazgo que tienen como resultado un perfil de liderazgo de facultad docente en un colegio del sur de la comunidad de Tejas. Las conclusiones incluyen el punto hasta que ejercicio de facultad identificó conductas se asociaron con liderazgo transformacional. Analiza de conducta auto informado de liderazgo fueron realizados basado en variables demográficas seleccionadas que incluyeron pero no fueron limitados al género, la edad, la carrera/etnia, grado más alto, los años de experiencia docente en la institución actual, y área de enseñanza de general. El análisis deductivo de datos de conducta de liderazgo de facultad encontró que ningunas diferencias significativas a través de variables demográficas menos al comparar carrera/etnia. La facultad hispana rayó apreciablemente más alto que facultad blanca en todos los áreas menos Favorece. En términos generales, facultad percibió conducta personal de liderazgo para ser más habilitante y menos inspirador.

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2 Introduction

Community colleges are uniquely characterized to create learning opportunities for everyone through open admission policies and affordable higher education (Boggs, 2003; Dowd, 2003). King and Gomez (2008) referenced a national survey reporting that nearly half of the college presidents, participating in the national study, were on the verge of retiring. Duree (2008) using data from a national survey of college presidents, reported that out of 415 participants in the survey, 79 percent planned to retire by 2012, and 84 percent by 2016. From the perspective of replacements, Riggs (2009) informed that it appears there is an insufficient number of rising replacement administrators. As leadership positions become vacant, community colleges will need to consider faculty as a viable leadership source (Cooper & Pagotto, 2003).

One seminal study to determine necessary community college leadership qualities was conducted through a survey of over 256 community college presidents. The results informed that presidents agreed the future community college leaders needed to be transformational leaders (Rouche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). Augmenting the body of leadership literature is the interest to study transformational leadership. According to Filan and Seagren (2003), transformational leadership is the ability to guide followers into raising their level of achievement for the organization's benefit rather than personal gain. Burns (1978) introduced some of the first descriptions of transformational leadership behavior that was demonstrated by leaders, who through various life changing events, lead others to perform extraordinarily beyond expectation. According to Burns, a transformational leader focused on challenging themselves and others to rise beyond expected levels of performance without having to coerce or reward others into following. In terms of scholarly importance, transformational leadership research has been credited for adding to the body of knowledge on leadership behavior explanations of how a leader gets others to reach higher levels of achievement (Yukl, 1999). One of the effects attributed to transformational leadership is the development of leadership in others (Robles, 1998; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Sergiovanni, 2007). Moreover, transformational leadership also instills confidence and motivation in others as a result of recognizing accomplishments (Palestini, 1998). Sergiovanni (2007) informed that one of the tenets of transformational leadership is to build a commitment towards achieving what is best for the organization instead of personal self interests. Similarly, Filan and Seagren (2003) attributed transformational leadership as the cause for change in others to strive towards achieving what is best for the organization instead of the individual. One additional distinguishable characteristic arising from transformational leadership is the process for change that begins by setting a vision and aligning all efforts for change in order to achieve the vision (Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Jandaghi, Matin, & Farjami, 2009).

Early research on leadership that resulted with a model of identified leadership behaviors associated with transformational leadership was performed by Kouzes and Posner (1987). They identified the five behaviors most commonly practiced by the leaders: challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart and are collectively known as the exemplary leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The selected questionnaire for this study was the Leadership Practices Inventory LPI-Self, which is used to assess these five leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). The LPI consists of 30 behavioral statements divided into six statements for each of the five leadership practices (Hillman, 2006). Each of the 30 statements is answered using a Likert scale that ranged from (1) almost never do what is described in the statement to (10) almost always do what is described in the statement (The Leadership Practices Inventory, 2002).

Rouche, Baker and Rose (1989) asserted that community colleges needed transformational leadership to exist amidst changing student demographics, accountability standards, and growing competition for fewer resources. Moreover, transformational leadership also instills confidence and motivation in others as a result of recognizing accomplishments (Palestini, 1998). Transformational leadership allows others to participate in getting the work accomplished using teams that are empowered and guided by a sense of mutual trust (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Leadership that transforms organizations begins with a trustworthy and model leader who gain acceptance through positive personal behavior for others to emulate (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

In order to carry out a higher education purpose, colleges have organizational structures that are hierarchical and tend to embrace positions of formal authority for providing the necessary administration and leadership. As leadership voids begin to multiply, community colleges must actively work on leadership succession. One of the most common experiences found among existing academic leaders is of having served as faculty. On the other hand, community colleges have experimented with seeking leaders from other sectors such as politicians, government officials, and business leaders, with the expectation that the deficiencies in academics would be overcome on-the-job (Pilan & Wolf, 2003).

Efforts to gain a better understanding of leadership have lead scholars to take interest in the study of leadership in academic settings. One approach to study academic leadership has been to look at leadership from the context of the formal administrative positions within the college. According to Davis (2003), post-secondary education institutions are characterized by organized units created for the purpose of coordinating educational functions where the administrator responsible for that unit is charged with providing leadership. In community colleges, an administrator may oversee multiple disciplines that are grouped into one academic unit consisting of several faculty and support employees (McArthur, 2002).

Literature demonstrates that persons in formal academic leadership positions share a common experience that begins as faculty and progressively changes through varying administrative roles and increasing responsibilities (Bisbee, 2007; Manzo, 2003). Green (1988) wrote that opportunities to become leaders arise when faculty are asked to step into administrative roles and do so without planning for such a career move.

This study represents an approach to bring attention to the leadership abilities of faculty for the purpose of providing leadership experiences and development to those demonstrating a commitment to the institution. Community colleges are realizing they need to actively pursue developing leaders from within (Phelan, 2005). Determining if differences in leadership behavior exist based on demographics can further refine the understanding of faculty leadership.

3 Methodology

A quantitative cross-sectional survey methodology was used to create a profile of faculty leadership behavior of 200 full-time faculty members at one south Texas community college, a Hispanic serving institute, in the Fall 2010 semester. This approach collects data at one point in time to learn more about a given population (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The study was designed to generate findings of self-perceived leadership behavior by faculty as measured by the LPI- Self and report differences in behaviors based on various faculty demographics as measured by a specifically developed questionnaire. Descriptive studies help researchers learn more about behaviors and demographics of people (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Participation packets were delivered to every instructional department of the college. All participants had an equal opportunity to be part of the study and could choose to participate or not. A non-random sampling of the population took place as a result of the participants returning completed packets. The independent data variables collected were gender, age, race/ethnicity, highest degree attained, years of teaching experience at the current institution, and general teaching area. The LPI was utilized to collect the dependent variables. It consists of 30 behavioral statements divided into six statements for each of the five leadership practices (Hillman, 2006). Each of the 30 statements is answered using a Likert scale that ranged from (1) almost never do what is described in the statement to (10) almost always do what is described in the statement (The Leadership Practices Inventory, 2002). Six dependent variables were collected from each participant including a computed total score and the following sub-scores from the LPI-Self: challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart, inspire a shared vision, and model the way.

The LPI has been subjected to various analyses to ensure both reliability and validity. Posner (2009) has demonstrated that the reliability of the LPI has been confirmed through the Cronbach alpha coefficients of internal reliability ranging from .73 for enable others, .74 for model the way, .79 for challenge the process, .86 for encourage the heart, and .88 for inspire a shared vision.

Statistical analyses using descriptive statistics and the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) were performed in search of significant differences among the independent variables. Statisticians note that the dependent variables contain the scores that account for differentiation between subjects and the statistical analysis performed determined the significance of those differences (Green & Salkind, 2005). Additionally, in conducting difference tests, the independent variables were used as categorical variables or grouping variables necessary to create the groupings that were analyzed (Corty, 2007).

4 Results

A total of 193 survey packets were distributed and 84 participants returned completed forms, for a response rate of 44%. Commercially available software was used to score the Leadership Practices Inventory. The independent variables of gender, race/ethnicity, highest degree, and general teaching area were examined.

4.1 Demographic Profile

The collected sample included 84 participants. Thirty four, or 40.5 percent, were female and 50, or 59.5, percent were male. The average age of participants was 49 years old with the youngest at 28 years of age while the oldest was 70 years of age. Both male and female participants were approximately similar in age; females ($M = 49.48$, $SD = 11.24$) and males ($M = 50.04$, $SD = 9.85$).

Participants were coded into three groups; an average age group, an older age group and a younger age group. Placement into the groups depended on age of the participant relative to the mean. Approximately 56% of participants ($n = 18$) were placed into the average group and 22% were placed into the older ($n = 18$) and younger group ($n = 18$). Only two of the participating faculty did not provide age and were not considered in the analysis of age.

Self-reported Hispanics comprised 75% of participants while self-reported Whites were 21.4 percent. In all, only three respondents self-reported other ethnicities (Black =1, Asian Pacific Islander=2). Highest degree was examined and revealed that approximately 25% of the participating faculty reported having less than a graduate level degree. A Masters degree was reported to be the common degree among participants. Table 1 reports the frequencies of group membership and corresponding percentages for highest degree earned.

Highest Degree Earned

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Less than Bachelors	15	17.9
Bachelors	6	7.1
Masters	51	60.7
First professional degree	4	4.8
Doctorate	8	9.5
Total	84	100.0

Table 1

The number of years of teaching experience at the current institution was examined in two parts. First, the years of teaching experience were examined to determine how long a person had been teaching ($M = 12.88$, $SD = 10.35$). Participants included newly hired faculty who had yet to finish a year of teaching at the institution. Conversely, the most experienced faculty had 41 years of teaching experience at the current institution. The researcher established groups after an initial examination of the mean and standard deviation of the variable years of teaching experience at current institution. Participants were coded into three groups; an average experience group, a more experienced group and a less experienced group. Approximately 68% of participants ($n = 57$) were placed into the average experience group. The more experienced group consisted of approximately 18% of the participants ($n = 15$) while the less experienced group consisted of 14% of participants ($n = 12$).

General teaching area was examined and revealed that the most represented faculty participants were from Arts and Humanities accounting for 33.3% while the least represented were from Math and Sciences at 16.7%. Table 2 reports the frequencies of group membership and corresponding percentages for the variable general teaching area.

General Teaching Area

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Arts and Humanities	28	33.3
Math and Sciences	14	16.7
Health Sciences	15	17.9
Workforce Education	27	32.1
Total	84	100.0

Table 2

4.2 Self-Perceived Leadership Behaviors

Based on the results, the behavior enable had the highest mean suggesting that the self-perceived leadership behavior of enabling others to act is commonly practiced while the lowest mean was scored on inspire, suggesting that inspiring a shared vision is the least engaged self-perceived behavior. Table 3 reports the means and standard deviations for each of the five sub-scores and the calculated total score that combines all five leadership practice scores into an overall score (Posner, 2009).

Self-perceived Leadership Behaviors of Faculty (N = 84)

Leadership Behavior	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Enable	50.35	6.214	34	60
Model	48.81	7.547	23	60
Encourage	48.37	9.499	20	60
Challenge	45.90	10.296	14	60
Inspire	45.02	10.660	10	60
Total Score	238.45	40.477	101	300

Table 3

Additional analysis was performed to examine the number of high score marks given for each of the five leadership behaviors. The results of this analysis suggest different faculty tendencies in leadership behavior. Focusing only on the highest score from every faculty, the behavior of challenging the process had the highest mean and enabling had the lowest, suggesting that faculty who challenge the process had higher tendencies to engage in this behavior than any of the other four behaviors. Refer to Table 4 for results of the high score analysis.

Leadership Behavior High Score Analysis

Leadership Behavior	n	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Challenge	10	55.90	3.14	51	60
Encourage	28	54.86	4.00	49	60
Inspire	11	53.64	6.18	41	60
Model	21	51.81	5.70	41	60
Enable	36	50.58	6.57	34	60

Table 4

Note. 14 faculty members reported duplicate high scores on more than one.

As regards gender, overall male participants had higher means across all five behaviors scoring the highest mean on the transformational leadership total score. The means and standard deviations are reported in Table 5.

Perceived Behavior Based on Gender

Behavior	N	M	SD
Model			
Female	34	46.91	8.24
Male	50	50.10	6.81
Inspire			
Female	34	43.18	10.61
Male	50	46.28	10.61
Challenge			
Female	34	44.18	10.08
Male	50	47.08	10.37
Enable			
Female	34	48.82	6.35
Male	50	51.38	5.96
Encourage			
Female	34	46.53	10.37
Male	50	49.62	8.74
Total Score			
Female	34	229.62	40.76
Male	50	244.26	39.56

Table 5

On completing a MANOVA, no significant differences were found between male and female groups on the self-perceived leadership behavior scores and the null hypothesis was accepted, Wilks' Lambda $F = .935(5.78)$, $p = .46$, $\eta^2 = .057$.

4.3 Age Group Differences on the Self-Perceived Behaviors

The research studied differences between age groups on the self-perceived leadership behavior scores. In all areas, the younger age group scored the highest followed by the older group. The means and standard deviations are reported in Table 6.

Perceived Behavior Based on Age

Behavior	n	M	SD
Model			
Average age group	46	48.39	7.10
Older group	18	48.94	9.42
Younger group	18	49.67	7.13
Inspire			
Average age group	46	44.52	9.79
Older group	18	45.11	13.91
Younger group	18	45.94	9.71
Challenge			
Average age group	46	45.13	9.55
Older group	18	46.50	12.61
Younger group	18	46.67	10.39
Enable			
Average age group	46	49.43	5.88
Older group	18	50.61	8.14
Younger group	18	52.15	4.76
Encourage			
Average age group	46	47.37	8.86
Older group	18	49.28	12.57
Younger group	18	49.50	8.85
Total Score			
Average age group	46	234.85	36.96
Older group	18	240.44	54.22
Younger group	18	243.94	35.61

Table 6

On completing a MANOVA, no significant differences were found among the age groups on the self-perceived leadership behavior scores and the null hypothesis was accepted, Wilks' Lambda $F = .43(10,150)$, $p = .93$, $\eta^2 = .028$.

4.4 Race and Ethnicity Groups Differences on Self-Perceived Behaviors

Only two groups, Whites and Hispanics, were considered due to the small number of participants in the other groups. Examining the descriptive statistics of means for race and ethnicity it was found that the single highest mean was scored by the Hispanic group on the behavior enable and the lowest single mean was scored by the White group on the behavior inspire. Overall the participants of the Hispanic group scored the highest mean on the transformational leadership total score. Descriptive statistics of means according to race and ethnicity groups are reported in Table 7.

Perceived Behavior Based on Race and Ethnicity

Behavior	n	MSD	SD
Model			
White	18	45.83	8.19
Hispanic	63	49.89	7.00
Inspire			
White	18	38.11	10.91
Hispanic	63	46.79	9.99
Challenge			
White	18	40.83	10.77
Hispanic	63	47.17	9.87
Enable			
White	18	47.39	6.37
Hispanic	63	51.27	5.80
Encourage			
White	18	45.06	10.81
Hispanic	63	49.41	8.49
Total Score			
White	18	217.22	43.83
Hispanic	63	244.54	37.36

Table 7

On completing a MANOVA, significant differences were found between the White and Hispanic groups on the self-perceived leadership behavior scores and the null hypothesis was rejected, Wilks' Lambda $F = 2.617(5,75)$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .15$. The strength of the relationship between the leadership behaviors and ethnicity was moderately high as assessed by η^2 , with race and ethnic identity accounting for 15% the variance.

Statistical significant differences were found between Whites and Hispanics on the perceived leadership behaviors of model $F(1,79) = 4.37$, $p = .04$, $\eta^2 = .05$; on the behavior inspire $F(1,79) = 10.15$, $p = .00$, $\eta^2 = .11$; on the behavior of challenge $F(1,79) = 5.54$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .07$; on the behavior enable $F(1,79) = 5.98$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .07$; and on total score $F(1,79) = 6.92$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

The strength of the relationship between the leadership behavior of inspiring and group membership was moderate with race and ethnic identity accounting for 11% of the variance. The strength of the relationship between the leadership behaviors of model, challenge, enable, total score and group membership was low as assessed by η^2 , with race and ethnic identity accounting for 5%, 7%, 7% and 8% respectively of the variance. Table 8 summarizes the results of the ANOVA analysis.

ANOVA for Race/Ethnicity Differences

Behavior	df	SS	MS	F	p	η^2
Model	1	230.26	230.26	4.37	.040	.052
Inspire	1	1055.41	1055.41	10.15	.002	.114
Challenge	1	562.96	562.96	5.54	.021	.066
Enable	1	210.86	210.86	5.98	.017	.070
Encourage	1	265.78	265.78	3.25	.075	.040
Total Score	1	10447.41	10447.41	6.92	.010	.081

Table 8

Note. Significance was set at $p \leq .05$

4.5 Highest Degree Differences on Self-Perceived Behaviors

Examining the descriptive statistics of means for highest degree earned, participants whose education level was less than a Bachelor's degree scored higher on average on the sub-scores of modeling, inspiring, and challenging. Participants with a professional educational level scored higher on the sub-scores enabling and encouraging. Bachelor level participants scored lower on the sub-scores of modeling and enabling, masters level educated participants scored lower on enabling while doctorate educated participants scored lower on inspiring and challenging the process. The single highest mean was from participants with professional degrees on the sub-score of encouraging while the lowest mean was from the doctorate educated group on the sub-score of inspiring. The professional educated group had the highest mean on the transformational leadership total score. Descriptive statistics of means according to degree level are reported in Table 9.

Perceived Behavior Based on Highest Degree

Behavior	n	MSD	SD
Model			
Less than Bachelors	15	50.60	4.56
Bachelors	6	45.17	6.91
Masters	51	48.37	8.23
First professional degree	4	50.00	8.52
Doctorate	8	50.38	7.76
Inspire			
Less than Bachelors	15	48.27	7.52
<i>continued on next page</i>			

Bachelors	6	44.67	11.65
Masters	51	44.45	10.90
First professional degree	4	44.75	14.03
Doctorate	8	43.00	13.19
Challenge			
Less than Bachelors	15	46.67	10.70
Bachelors	6	46.17	11.51
Masters	51	45.92	10.30
First professional degree	4	46.50	11.35
Doctorate	8	43.88	10.65
Enable			
Less than Bachelors	15	50.40	7.01
Bachelors	6	48.33	4.13
Masters	51	50.18	6.13
First professional degree	4	53.50	6.02
Doctorate	8	43.88	10.65
Encourage			
Less than Bachelors	15	48.67	9.94
Bachelors	6	48.50	5.39
Masters	51	47.67	9.74
First professional degree	4	53.75	4.03
Doctorate	8	49.50	12.01
Total Score			
Less than Bachelors	15	244.60	37.46
Bachelors	6	232.83	33.86
Masters	51	236.59	41.82
First professional degree	4	248.50	43.19
Doctorate	8	238.00	48.12

Table 9

On completing a MANOVA, no significant differences were found among the highest degree groups on the self-perceived leadership behavior scores and the null hypothesis was accepted, Wilks' Lambda $F = 1.093$ (20,250), $p = .36$, $\eta^2 = .068$.

4.6 Years of Teaching at Current Institution Differences on Self-Perceived Behaviors

Examining the descriptive statistics of means for years of teaching experience informed that the more experienced group had higher means on all the five leadership behavior sub-scores while the less experienced group scored the lowest means across all five behaviors. The single highest mean was scored by the more experienced group on the behavior enabling others to act while the single lowest mean was scored by the

less experienced group on the behavior of challenging the process. Overall the more experienced group had higher means across all five behaviors scoring the highest mean on the transformational leadership total score. Descriptive statistics of means according to years of teaching experience are reported in Table 10.

Perceived Behavior Based on Teaching Experience at Current Institution

Behavior	n	M	SD
Model			
More experienced group	15	50.47	8.93
Average experience group	57	48.84	7.06
Less experienced group	12	46.58	7.99
Inspire			
More experienced group	15	48.27	12.96
Average experience group	57	44.79	9.96
Less experienced group	12	42.08	10.68
Challenge			
More experienced group	15	49.00	10.76
Average experience group	57	46.07	9.69
Less experienced group	12	41.25	11.72
Enable			
More experienced group	15	51.33	7.23
Average experience group	57	50.12	6.25
Less experienced group	12	50.17	4.85
Encourage			
More experienced group	15	51.27	10.20
Average experience group	57	48.49	8.79
Less experienced group	12	44.17	11.12
Total Score			
More experienced group	15	250.33	47.72
Average experience group	57	238.32	37.91
Less experienced group	12	224.25	41.63

Table 10

On completing a MANOVA, no significant differences were found among the less, average and more experienced groups on the self-perceived leadership behavior scores and the null hypothesis was accepted, Wilks' Lambda $F = 1.161 (10,154)$, $p = .32$, $\eta^2 = .07$.

4.7 General Teaching Area Differences on Self-Perceived Behaviors

Examining the descriptive statistics of means for general teaching area revealed that participants from Health Sciences scored higher means on the sub-scores for modeling, inspiring, enabling and encouraging

while participants from Workforce Education scored a higher mean on challenging. Lowest mean scores were split between participants from the Arts and Humanities on modeling, inspiring, challenging and Math and Sciences scoring the lowest means for enabling and encouraging. The highest mean was Health Sciences for enabling while the lowest was Arts and Humanities for inspiring. Health Sciences had higher means on the transformational leadership total score. Descriptive statistics of means based on general teaching area are reported in Table 11.

Perceived Behavior Based on general Teaching Area

Behavior	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Model			
Arts and Humanities	28	47.21	7.04
Math and Sciences	14	48.86	9.04
Health Sciences	15	50.60	5.27
Workforce Education	27	49.44	8.33
Inspire			
Arts and Humanities	28	41.43	11.09
Math and Sciences	14	44.79	9.06
Health Sciences	15	48.67	7.06
Workforce Education	27	46.85	11.91
Challenge			
Arts and Humanities	28	43.57	9.85
Math and Sciences	14	45.50	9.09
Health Sciences	15	47.00	9.51
Workforce Education	27	47.93	11.68
Enable			
Arts and Humanities	28	49.54	5.39
Math and Sciences	14	49.50	6.37
Health Sciences	15	51.40	5.34
Workforce Education	27	51.04	7.42
Encourage			
Arts and Humanities	28	47.29	9.22
Math and Sciences	14	47.00	10.77
Health Sciences	15	49.73	8.87
Workforce Education	27	49.44	9.73
Total Score			
Arts and Humanities	28	229.04	38.45
Math and Sciences	14	235.64	40.18
Health Sciences	15	247.40	30.41
Workforce Education	27	244.70	46.93

Table 11

On completing a MANOVA, no significant differences were found among the general teaching area groups on the self-perceived leadership behavior scores and the null hypothesis was accepted, Wilks' Lambda $F = .710 (15, 210)$, $p = .77$, $\eta^2 = .04$.

5 Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations

Several limitations in the study were identified and are associated with affecting the results. First, the assessment of leadership behaviors was performed by faculty who were presently employed at one community college in south Texas during the Fall 2010 semester, therefore limiting the size of the sample and the generalizability. However, as this was a Hispanic serving institution and 75% of the sample denoted Hispanic ethnicity, other Hispanic serving institutions can benefit from the information. Second, this study investigated self-perceived leadership behaviors rather than actual behaviors. Third, the completion of the self-assessment of leadership behaviors might have been subject to personal bias or interpretation, as evidenced by some assessments having perfect scores on the LPI-Self.

Literature notes that the current leaders of community colleges are retiring or will soon retire (Ashburn, 2007; Boggs, 2003; Durree, 2008; Jensen, 2000; Shults, 2001). In preparing for the possible lack of leaders necessary to serve as replacements, every potential leadership pool should be considered and community colleges have the opportunity to identify future leaders from among their faculty. This study brings attention to the leadership abilities of faculty for the purpose of identifying leadership potential. Analyzing personal leadership perceptions of faculty can help determine how exemplary leadership behavior is exercised and presents a starting point for further leadership identification and development.

Transformational leadership has made a difference in organizations that face constant competition and must adapt in order to maintain success (Jandaghi, Matin, & Farjami, 2009). Leadership research in community colleges has focused on top level leadership such as presidents and other levels of administration (Aaker, 2003; Grafton, 2009; Holt, 2003; Schacherer, 2004; Stevenson, 2008; Stout-Steward, 2005; Skyers, 2006) but is limited when it comes to leadership at other levels. To expand current knowledge of community college leadership, this study sought to examine how faculty viewed personal leadership and whether those views differed according to demographics.

In summary, faculty reported higher engagement in enabling and less in inspiring behavior. Significant differences were found between Whites and Hispanic on the perceptions by faculty of personal leadership behavior. Investigating those differences in this study suggests there is a gap in personal view of leadership, with Hispanics self-identifying to be more engaged in modeling, inspiring, challenging, enabling, and transformational behavior than Whites. Comparing the perceptions by faculty of personal leadership behavior across the demographics of gender, age, highest degree, years of teaching experience, and general teaching area no significant differences were found although trends were noticed in the descriptive statistics. In comparing gender, males scored higher in all areas of transformative leadership. In comparing age groups, the younger group scored higher in all areas. Perceived behavior based on teaching experience at current institution resulted in the more experienced group scoring higher in all areas. When race/ethnicity was used as a comparison it was found that the Hispanic scored higher than the Whites in all areas of transformed leadership.

The following recommendations are suggested as a result of this study. Faculty demographics did not differentiate perceived behavior for the exception of race and ethnicity. Cultural differences, although not part of this study, may have influenced personal leadership perceptions. Further study could explore those influences. Studying one single community college in one geographic region limited the diversity of participants. Future research could examine multiple community colleges covering a greater geographic region. The study was limited to full-time faculty. An examination of leadership practices between full-time and part-time faculty could additionally help answer leadership behavior questions and expand further the leadership pool. The propensity to assume a leadership role was not explored. Further research could help determine if faculty are willing to assume a formal leadership position while leadership identification efforts are underway. A repeat of the study could be performed using a larger sample size to avoid having small groups. In this study, there were groups with one or two participants only.

6 References

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